



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

SUBJECT POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES	POLICY NO. 608.5	EFFECTIVE DATE 10/1/89	PAGE Page 1 of 3
APPROVED BY: original signed by: ROBERTO QUIROZ Director	SUPERSEDES 706.04 10/1/84	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 4/2/79	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To identify Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy relating to political activities of employees.

POLICY

2.1 PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

An officer or employee of the DMH may:

- 2.1.1 Vote.
- 2.1.2 Express opinions on all political subjects and candidates.
- 2.1.3 Become a candidate for nomination or election in any partisan or non-partisan campaign - national, state or local. (Note: County employees subject to the Hatch Act* may not run for partisan elective office.)
- 2.1.4 Engage in partisan and non-partisan political activities as an individual or as a member of a group.
- 2.1.5 Contribute to political campaign funds (but not in a County building).
- 2.1.6 Join political organizations and vote on any questions presented.
- 2.1.7 Organize and manage political clubs; serve as an officer, delegate, or alternate, or as a member of any committee; address such club on any partisan or non-partisan political matter.
- 2.1.8 Participate actively in political conventions such as by making motions or addresses or preparing resolutions.
- 2.1.9 Attend political meetings, rallies, caucuses, etc. and organize, prepare or conduct such gatherings.



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- 2.1.10 Participate actively, or serve as an officer, on any committee of a political organization, such as: precinct committee member, or chair of food committee at a campaign dinner.
- 2.1.11 Join labor union, civic betterment group, or citizen's association.
- 2.1.12 Initiate, sign, or circulate partisan or non-partisan nominating petitions; distribute campaign literature, badges, etc. (but not during working hours or on County property).
- 2.1.13 Wear badges or buttons; display bumper stickers, pictures or posters on automobiles or in windows of home.
- 2.1.14 Speak publicly, or write letters or articles for or against any political candidate; endorse or oppose such candidate in a political advertisement, broadcast, campaign literature or similar material.
- 2.1.15 Own stock in, publish, or be connected with the management or editorial policy of a partisan newspaper.
- 2.1.16 Manage the campaign of a political candidate.
- 2.1.17 Make or solicit political contributions (except from other County employees or those on County employment lists).
- 2.1.18 Solicit contributions to promote or defeat a ballot measure which would affect County employee's pay, hours of work, civil service, or other working conditions.

2.2 PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

An officer or employee of the Department of Mental Health may not:

- 2.2.1 Engage in any political activity whatsoever during working hours or on County premises.
- 2.2.2 Place or attach any political poster, stickers, signs, or similar material on County property.
- 2.2.3 Solicit contributions, signatures, or other forms of support for political candidates, parties or ballot measures within or upon County property at any time. (Example: A County employee or a member of the general public may not solicit signatures for a nominating petition in a County building or on County property.)



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- 2.2.4 Directly or indirectly use official authority to interfere with any election or to influence the political actions of other County employees or any member of the general public. (Example: County employees may not attempt to influence anyone's vote by such methods as promising, or threatening to withhold, a job, promotion or other benefit).
- 2.2.5 Favor or discriminate against any employee or person seeking County employment because of political opinions or affiliations.
- 2.2.6 Participate in any political activities of any kind in uniform. (Example: Sheriff deputies, fire fighters, ambulance crews, and security guards may not participate in political activities of any kind while in uniform.)
- 2.3 Employees may request leaves of absence without pay to engage in political activities. The Director of Mental Health may grant such leaves of absence without pay, not to exceed twelve months, provided the employee has submitted a written request and such request has been approved by the appropriate Deputy Director.
- 2.3.1 Employees who are subject to the basic political activity prohibitions while on active duty are equally subject to such restrictions when on paid or unpaid leave. (Example: An employee on leave of absence is restricted from participating in the solicitation of names on or within County premises but would not be restricted from soliciting names outside of County premises.)
- * The Hatch Act is a set of provisions in the United States Code (Title 5, Chapter 15, USC, 1501, et seq.) which governs the partisan political activities of employees of State or Local agencies whose principal employment is in connection with an activity which is financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by a Federal agency. For the Department of Mental Health, the Hatch Act would apply only to those grants which are received directly from the Federal Government. It does not include Federally funded loans and grants which are received by the State and transferred to the County.

AUTHORITY

County Counsel Opinion, May 1, 1978